

Frequently Asked Questions regarding National Provider Identifier (NPI) Registration

QUESTION 1: What is the National Provider Identifier (NPI)?

ANSWER: The NPI is a unique identification number for health care providers that will be used by all health plans in all standard transactions. The NPI is all numeric and is 10 positions in length: the first nine positions are the identifier and the last position is a check digit. The check digit helps detect invalid NPIs. There is no embedded intelligence in the NPI that identifies the type of health care provider. The Department for Medicaid Services (DMS)/KY Medicaid requires the NPI on all claims received May 23, 2008 and after.

QUESTION 2: What is a taxonomy code?

ANSWER: The Healthcare Provider Taxonomy Codes are a HIPAA standard code set named in the implementation specifications for some standard HIPAA transactions. Originally intended to designate specialty, there has been no validation of these taxonomy codes—providers have been able to choose taxonomy code(s) as they desired. Therefore, KY Medicaid has determined that taxonomy code(s) will be utilized as a second identifier only. A provider's specialty will be indicated within their file.

QUESTION 3: Who needs an NPI?

ANSWER: Entities who meet the definition of "health care provider", as defined at 45 C.F.R. § 160.103, are eligible to receive NPIs. Health care providers include hospitals, nursing homes, durable medical equipment suppliers, clinical laboratories, pharmacies, and many other "institutional" type providers; physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, and many other health care practitioners and professionals; group practices, health maintenance organizations, and others. A list of providers requiring an NPI is on the following websites:

1. DMS NPI page at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dms/NPI.htm>
2. First Health's website at <https://kentucky.fhsc.com/kmaa/providers/npi.asp>

QUESTION 4: Do all providers have to have an NPI?

ANSWER: No, some providers (classified as "atypical") aren't required to have an NPI. Atypical provider types include:

- Hands
- Commission for Handicapped Children
- Title V
- First Steps
- Impact Plus
- Non-emergency Transportation

QUESTION 5: How can a health care provider obtain an NPI?

ANSWER: Health care providers have been able to apply for an NPI in one of three ways:

- Apply through a web-based application process. The web address is <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>.
- Prepare and send a paper application form to the Enumerator (Fox Systems). A copy of the application form, which includes the Enumerator's mailing address, will be available only upon request through the NPI Enumerator. The Enumerator's phone number is (800) 465-3203 or TTY (800) 692-2326.
- With the permission of the health care provider, an organization may submit a health care provider's application in an electronic file.

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QUESTION 6: How long will it take to get an NPI?

ANSWER: We cannot predict the amount of time it will take to obtain a NPI because several factors come into play. Such factors include the volume of applications being processed at a given time, whether the application was submitted electronically or on paper, and whether the application was complete and passed all edits. We expect that a health care provider who submits a properly completed electronic application could have its NPI in 10 days.

QUESTION 7: What does KY Medicaid providers need to do?

ANSWER: As soon as possible, KY Medicaid providers should:

- Obtain their NPI and taxonomy code(s)
- Share this information with First Health and all other health plans they participate in
- Begin using their NPI and taxonomy code(s) in standard transactions, paper and electronic claims included.

QUESTION 8: How do I submit my NPI and taxonomy code information to First Health?

ANSWER: You should submit one of the following documents:

- FOX Systems verification letter
- FOX Systems verification email
- NPES Registry Print-out

The provider number associated with the NPI should be clearly printed or handwritten on the document. All applicable taxonomy code(s) should also be clearly printed or handwritten on the document. Submit the document to one of the following:

- Mail: First Health
P.O. Box 2110
Frankfort, KY 40602
- Fax: 502-607-8404
- Email: kyhealthchoicesprovider@firsthealth.com

QUESTION 9: Will a health care provider continue to use other numbers besides the NPI to identify itself in standard transactions after the compliance date?

ANSWER: Upon the compliance dates, only the NPI may be used for identification purposes for a health care provider in standard transactions; legacy identifiers (such as the Unique Physician Identification Number (UPIN), Medicaid Provider Number, Medicare Provider Number, and others) may not be used. Use of any other identifier on claims will result in denials.

QUESTION 10: Will a health care provider's NPI ever change?

ANSWER: The NPI is meant to be a lasting identifier, and is expected to remain unchanged even if a health care provider changes their name, address, provider taxonomy, or other information that was furnished as part of the original NPI application process.

Note: There are some situations, however, in which an NPI may change such as when health care provider organizations determine they may need a new NPI due to, for example, certain changes of ownership, the conditions of a purchase, or new owner's subpart strategies. There also may be situations where a new NPI is necessary because the current NPI was used for fraudulent purposes.

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QUESTION 11: There are several ways I can enumerate—how should I set up my NPI and taxonomy code(s)?

ANSWER: While Kentucky Medicaid cannot tell a provider how to enumerate, we do have some guidelines and suggestions regarding enumeration. Our main goal is to eliminate as much confusion and issues with claims processing as possible. Here are some scenarios:

If you have:

One individual number (with SSN)

- You should have only one NPI and at least one taxonomy code.

One individual number (with SSN and FEIN on file)

- You should have at least one NPI and at least one taxonomy code.
- You may have two NPIs with at least one taxonomy code for each—one NPI may be obtained for your SSN and one for your FEIN—both NPIs can be included on your file

One group number (with FEIN)

- You should have at least one NPI and at least one taxonomy code.
- You may have more than one NPI with at least one taxonomy code depending on if you have obtained an NPI for each of your locations—all NPIs can be included on your file.

Two individual numbers with the same SSN

- You should have only one NPI
- You should have at least one unique taxonomy code for each individual provider number—you CANNOT have the same taxonomy code for each number

Two individual numbers with different SSN

- Because each has its own SSN, each must obtain its own NPI and at least one taxonomy code.

Two group numbers with the same FEIN

- You could have only one NPI
- You should have at least one unique taxonomy code for each group provider number—you CANNOT have the same taxonomy code for each number
- You may have more than one NPI with at least one taxonomy code depending on if you have obtained an NPI for each of your locations—all NPIs can be included on your file. You CANNOT have the same taxonomy code for each number (if you include all NPIs on both group number files)

Two group numbers with different FEIN

- Because each has its own FEIN, each must obtain its own NPI and at least one taxonomy code.

An individual number (with SSN) and a group number (with FEIN)

- An individual number and a group number CANNOT share an NPI

NPI Resources

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid NPI Resources:

- CMS NPI Overview: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentstand/>
- CMS NPI FAQs: http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?p_sid=Qjr3YRYh&p_lva=&p_li=&p_page=1

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Other NPI Resources:

- APPLY FOR NPI: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do>
- VIEW/OBTAIN NPES PRINTOUT:
<https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/NPIRegistryHome.do>
- NPI FINAL RULE:
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/pdf/04-1149.pdf>
- EDS (BILLING/CLAIMS):
<http://www.kymmis.com/kymmis/Provider%20Relations/billingInst.aspx>
- First Health (ENROLLMENT/FILE MAINTENANCE/NPI REGISTRATION):
<http://kyhealthchoices.fhsc.com>
- DMS: <http://chfs.ky.gov/dms/>

Helpful Phone Numbers:

- First Health NPI/Taxonomy at (800) 639-5195
- EDS Provider Relations at (800) 807-1232
- EDI Helpdesk at (800) 205-4696